

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON.

Resignation of Mr. Cameron,
Secretary of War.Appointment of Edwin M. Stanton,
of Pennsylvania, as Chief
of the War Department.Mr. Cameron Appointed Min-
ister to Russia.

INTERESTING PROCEEDINGS IN CONGRESS.

Astounding Revelations Respecting the Frauds
on the Government by Army Contractors.Important Report Relative to Our
Consuls Abroad.Retrenchment of the Govern-
ment Expenses,
&c., &c., &c.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13, 1862.

RESIGNATION OF MR. CAMERON AND APPOINTMENT
OF EDWIN M. STANTON, OF PENNSYLVANIA, AS
SECRETARY OF WAR.—MR. CAMERON APPOINTED
MINISTER TO RUSSIA.

The retirement of General Cameron from the Cabinet, although suddenly announced, has long been contemplated. The President, who has been daily commiserating, and he was quite anxious to retire as those who importuned the President for his removal were desirous of a change. The request of Cassius M. Clay, Minister to Russia, to be allowed to return to the United States, and take an active part in the field, afforded an opportunity for the transfer of General Cameron to that position, and enabled him to leave the Cabinet with becoming grace and dignity.

Gen. E. M. Stanton, the newly appointed Secretary of War, is a man of acknowledged and proved ability. When, in the dark days of the decline of the Buchanan Dynasty, he accepted the Attorney Generalship, it was to save the country. He struck hands with Mr. Holt, then Secretary of War, and they determined that the President should adhere to the constitution or suffer impeachment. He has the confidence of the President and of General McClellan. The appointment is hailed with delight by all who have been anxiously watching the course of events with an earnest desire for the maintenance of the integrity, the honor and the welfare of the Republic.

General Cameron will immediately proceed to St. Petersburg to relieve Cassius M. Clay, who will be offered the vacant Major Generalship in the United States Army.

Our present relations with Europe are deemed highly important and interesting, and as Russia seems to be a strong friendly power, the President was anxious that some one should act as Minister to the Court of St. Petersburg in whom he has entire confidence, who can ably and fairly represent his views and aid our cause in Europe. General Cameron accepted the office of Secretary of War with great reluctance, preferring to retain his seat in the Senate, and has always declared his intention to vacate the place when the interests of the country should allow and he could have a proper successor.

The gentleman selected, Edwin M. Stanton, is a warm personal friend of General Cameron, is from his own State, and has accepted the position at the latter's solicitation. Mr. Stanton, it will be recollected, was Attorney General toward the conclusion of the Buchanan Administration. In taking the arduous position he sacrifices an immense private business to serve the government. The appointment is popular, as it is generally conceded he is a man of sterling integrity, without any political affiliations to trammel his action in any case which may come under his supervision, while he will prove an able counselor in the Cabinet and a most valuable officer in his department.

The friends of Gen. Cameron claim that he can well afford to lay aside his exhausting labors, having accomplished so much in the organization and equipment of the largest army ever assembled on the American continent. The appointment of Mr. Stanton as Secretary of War was given almost universal satisfaction here. His nomination was confirmed by the Senate to-day. Mr. Stanton was born in Steubenville, Ohio. He is not a relative of the family of Stanton who filled prominent political positions from Kentucky, Tennessee and Kansas. He graduated at Kenyon College, Ohio, studied law at Steubenville, and rose rapidly to the highest eminence in the profession in that State. He was educated a while, but to devote his political career as an ultra democrat, belonging to the school of hard democracy of Ohio, which has since become strongly anti-slavery. Although a decided partisan, he was never an office seeker, and could not be induced to abandon his profession for political office. In 1848 he removed to Pittsburgh, where he pursued the practice of the law, and at once took a leading position in the profession. His national reputation was first won in the great Wheeling Bridge Case, in which he was successful, although by an act of Congress declaring the bridge a post route. The decision of the Court was subsequently annulled. In all his career he has been remarkable for vigorous and powerful advocacy, exhibiting great force of character, unimpeachable firmness, and adherence to his convictions of right and unimpeachable integrity. With all these he has evinced a remarkable uniformity of character and great administrative talent. About the commencement of Mr. Buchanan's Administration he was selected to represent the government in an important land case in California, which he managed successfully. On his return he began the practice of law in the Supreme Court at Washington. When the present troubles began to culminate, in the last days of the administration of James Buchanan, Mr. Stanton was reluctantly induced to take the Attorney Generalship at the moment when the ship of State seemed about to go down upon the rocks of rebellion. His course then was that of a staunch Union man, and a true lover of his country. Clear-headed and unimpeachably firm, he insisted that the government should be brought back to the constitutional course, and kept steadily upon it, even by the weak hands of the old man of Wheatland. Since his removal to Pennsylvania he has mingled little in politics, and although nominally a democrat, has been identified with no party. He comes into the Cabinet as Secretary of the most important department of the government, with a strong head, a clear heart, and a pure heart, an unblemished reputation for integrity, and a determination to do right, let whomever it come of it, without reference to either personal friends or antipathies.

The nomination of Mr. Cameron to the Russian mission is understood to have met with some unexpected opposition from the radical faction in the Senate. It is opposed by some of those who are the most strenuous advocates of the peculiar views he has recently expressed. The nomination has not yet been confirmed.

MOVEMENTS OF THE FINANCIERS.

Committees from New York, representing money interests, are still in communication with the Treasury Department and the Committees of Ways and Means and of Finance.

CONDITION OF GEN. MCCLELLAN.

General McClellan is reported infinitely better to-night. He will resume his office duties to-morrow.

THE TRIP OF THE WAR STEAMER PENACOLA DOWN THE POTOMAC.

Acting Master G. H. Avery, commanding the Potomac, accompanied the Penacola on her trip down the Potomac, returned to-day. He reports that the Penacola was not hit by any of the shot or shells from the rebel batteries, and did not fire a gun. After having passed Cockey Point, two shots were fired at her, but they fell in the water of the ship. Armed with Shipping Point and Evansport thirty shots were fired by the rebels, principally shells from thirty-two pounders. They passed from thirty to sixty feet above the surface of the water, and fell in almost every direction, without hitting the Penacola. She was making eleven knots an hour. The last shell was fired when she was about a mile and a half below the battery. It passed above the mizenmast, and through the

main and fore rigging, and burst about twenty feet above the vessel. Off stage Pass, about three miles below the battery, she came to anchor to wait for daylight. As they passed Aquia creek they were fired at from both points on the hills, but the shot fell short. The Penacola was piloted by Captain Walters. The night was dark, and in passing Mattawoman Flats there was only one light to spare between the keel of the ship and the mud.

The Potomac left the Potomac at the mouth of the Potomac, at half past eight o'clock A. M., and returned last night. In passing the batteries on the upward trip the only shot fired at her was from Shipping Point.

AFFAIRS ON THE LOWER POTOMAC.

Several orders, and small boats have come up during the thick weather, without any interruption.

THE CONSULAR SYSTEM AS CONNECTED WITH THE REBELLION.

The Secretary of State has responded to the letter of Senator Fremont, Chairman of the Committee on Finance, requesting certain information connected with the consular system, and also explanations in regard to the reasons which induced the creation of offices or the increase of compensation. The Secretary says:—

It will be seen from the last submitted that seven consular offices only have been created, with salaries of \$1,500, the compensation of two of them increased from \$500 per annum to \$1,500; one from \$750 to \$1,500; six from \$1,000 to \$1,500. Of thirty-three the compensation has been changed from less than \$1,000 to \$1,500, and from \$1,500 to \$2,000, and from \$2,000 to \$2,500, and from \$2,500 to \$3,000, and from \$3,000 to \$3,500, and from \$3,500 to \$4,000, and from \$4,000 to \$4,500, and from \$4,500 to \$5,000, and from \$5,000 to \$5,500, and from \$5,500 to \$6,000, and from \$6,000 to \$6,500, and from \$6,500 to \$7,000, and from \$7,000 to \$7,500, and from \$7,500 to \$8,000, and from \$8,000 to \$8,500, and from \$8,500 to \$9,000, and from \$9,000 to \$9,500, and from \$9,500 to \$10,000, and from \$10,000 to \$10,500, and from \$10,500 to \$11,000, and from \$11,000 to \$11,500, and from \$11,500 to \$12,000, and from \$12,000 to \$12,500, and from \$12,500 to \$13,000, and from \$13,000 to \$13,500, and from \$13,500 to \$14,000, and from \$14,000 to \$14,500, and from \$14,500 to \$15,000, and from \$15,000 to \$15,500, and from \$15,500 to \$16,000, and from \$16,000 to \$16,500, and from \$16,500 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